

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

“Hélène Berr, A Stolen Life”

**An exhibition designed, created, and circulated by
Mémorial de la Shoah, Paris, France**

January 22, 2014–March 15, 2014

Opening Reception:
Wednesday, January 22, 2014, from 7:00–9:00 PM

Alliance Française d’Atlanta & Goethe-Zentrum Atlanta
Colony Square, Suite 561
1197 Peachtree Street NE
Atlanta, Georgia 30361

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Hélène Berr’s official portrait, 1942 © Mémorial de la Shoah – Coll. Mariette Job

Alliance Française d’Atlanta and the Goethe-Zentrum Atlanta in partnership with the Consulate General of France, the German Consulate General, the Georgia Commission on the Holocaust, and the William Breman Jewish Heritage Museum host the “Hélène Berr, A Stolen Life” exhibit created, designed, and circulated by the Mémorial de la Shoah in Paris, France.

Atlanta, GA – Alliance Française & the Goethe-Zentrum will be inaugurating the “Hélène Berr, A Stolen Life” exhibit on Wednesday, January 22 from 7:00–9:00pm.

Invited to deliver the opening address are Mr. Denis Barbet, Consul General of France in Atlanta, Mr. Christoph Sander, Consul General of the Federal Republic of Germany in Atlanta, and Mr. Jacques Fredj, Executive Director of Mémorial de la Shoah. Introductory presentations will take place from 7:00–8:00pm in the auditorium of the Alliance Française d’Atlanta & the Goethe-Zentrum Atlanta, followed by a reception and visit of the exhibition from 8:00–9:00pm which takes place in their location at 1197 Peachtree Street, Colony Square, Plaza Level, Suite 561 in Midtown Atlanta.

Alliance Française d’Atlanta and the Goethe-Zentrum Atlanta are united in their mission of cultural and language exchange in the Atlanta community. The Hélène Berr exhibit is an example of the diverse cultural programming on which these organizations partner. 2013 marked the 50th anniversary of the Élysée Treaty, or Treaty of Friendship between France and Germany. It is in this spirit of partnership that the Hélène Berr exhibition is brought to Atlanta.

« Writing the entire reality and the tragic things we live, given all their bare seriousness and without deforming them with words, that is a very difficult task which requires a constant effort. »

Almost two years after the publication of the Journal, written between 1942 and 1944, the Mémorial de la Shoah chose to return to the tragic destiny of Hélène Berr, a young Parisian girl deported to Auschwitz in 1944. Expanding beyond the strict frame of the journal and the personality of Hélène Berr, this exhibit elaborates on the background of the Occupation and tackles more largely the persecution of the Jews in France.

A student of English, H el ene Berr was 21 years old when she began writing her *Journal*. The year was 1942 and the anti-Jewish laws of Vichy started to radically change her life little by little. Until March of 1944, the date of her arrest, she kept her *Journal* on a daily basis. Deported to Auschwitz with her parents, she died in 1945 at Bergen-Belsen, a few days before the camp's liberation. This text, of an exceptional literary quality, a subtle account of what France and Paris of the Occupation were like, reveals a real premonition of the inevitable, as the last lines of her *Journal* evoke: "Horror, Horror, Horror."

In a deeply moving written account, this text mixes the daily experience of the unbearable with the ideal world of letters, alternating in every moment between hope and desperation. Regarding wearing the yellow star, H el ene wrote: «My God, I would not believe that this would be so hard. I have had a lot of courage all day. I kept my head high, and I looked at peoples' faces so well as they averted their eyes. But it is hard. Otherwise, the majority of people do not look. The most painful part is meeting other people who wear it. »

For sixty years, the manuscript of H el ene Berr's diary did not exist except as a painful family heritage. One day in 2002, Mariette Job, H el ene's niece, decided to entrust the manuscript with the M emorial de la Shoah. Published by Tallandier in January of 2008, the diary met an immense success from the very beginning of its publication.

Through this exhibition, the M emorial de la Shoah offers the public the opportunity to discover several family documents archived at the museum's documentation center, other archives that broaden the historical context, as well as reproductions of the original manuscript and an interactive map of Paris.

This exhibition, curated by Karen Taieb and Sophie Nagiscarde, was designed, created, and circulated by M emorial de la Shoah (Paris, France), and made possible through the generous support of SNCF.

Driving Directions:

From I-85 North or South take exit 84, 14th Street to Peachtree Street. From I-75 North or South take exit 250 to 14th Street towards Peachtree Street. Parking is available at Colony Square, please bring your parking ticket for validation of up to 4 hours of parking after 5pm. The exhibition is located on the Plaza level.

RSVP to deborah.farnault@memorialdelashoah.org

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H el ene and the UGIF children, Aubergenville – a village approximately 30 miles west of Paris, 1942-1943
  M emorial de la Shoah – Coll. Mariette Job

Alliance Fran aise d'Atlanta is an independent and non-profit organization, founded in 1912, serving the Atlanta community as the premier provider of French language and culture. The mission of Alliance Fran aise d'Atlanta is to encourage the study of French language and cultures and to foster cultural, intellectual, and artistic exchanges between the French-speaking world and our local communities. We offer French language studies and cultural exchange programs promoting French culture, as well as representing France and 50 Francophone countries in Africa, Asia, Europe, and North America. With more than 1000 members served annually, we offer a variety of courses, social activities and cultural events. It has no political or religious affiliation and does not discriminate on the basis of age, sex, creed, race, color, and national or ethnic origin. Visit: www.afatl.com

Goethe-Zentrum Atlanta supports and informs all those who would like to teach or study German and are interested in Germany and its culture. Through a variety of cultural events the center promotes international cultural cooperation and plays a large role in building bridges of understanding and in conveying the appropriate image of modern Germany. The Goethe-Zentrum Atlanta is part of the general network of the 140 Goethe-Instituts worldwide. The Goethe-Zentrum Atlanta supports German teachers in Alabama, Arkansas, North Carolina, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Tennessee, and Texas, and offers workshops and seminars for teachers of German as a foreign language. A network of particularly qualified teachers has been charged with the task of spreading the newest ideas on teaching techniques and didactics in multiple seminars throughout the whole region. A large program of internationally recognized exams, which can be taken in 15 examination centers throughout the region, complements the program of the Goethe-Zentrum for learners of German. Visit: www.goethe.de/atlanta

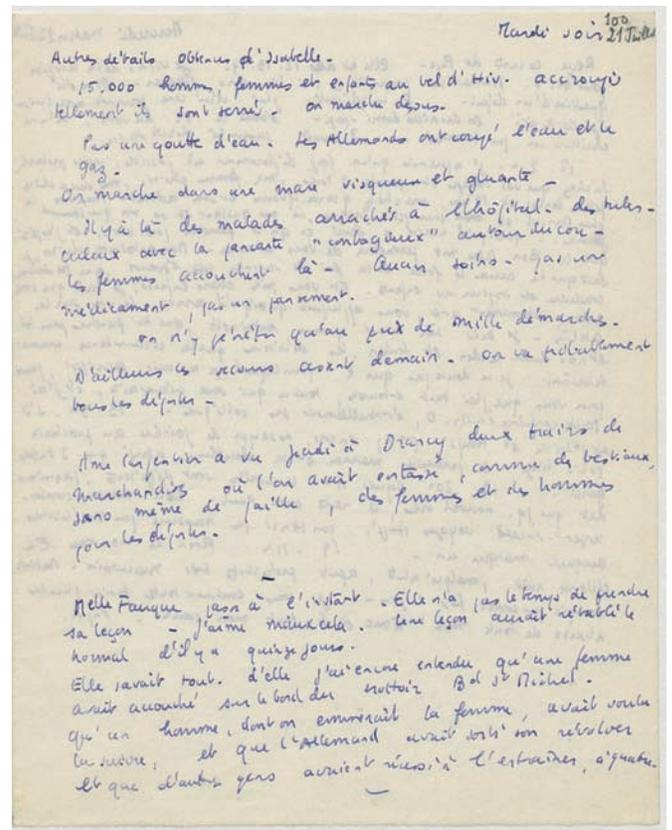
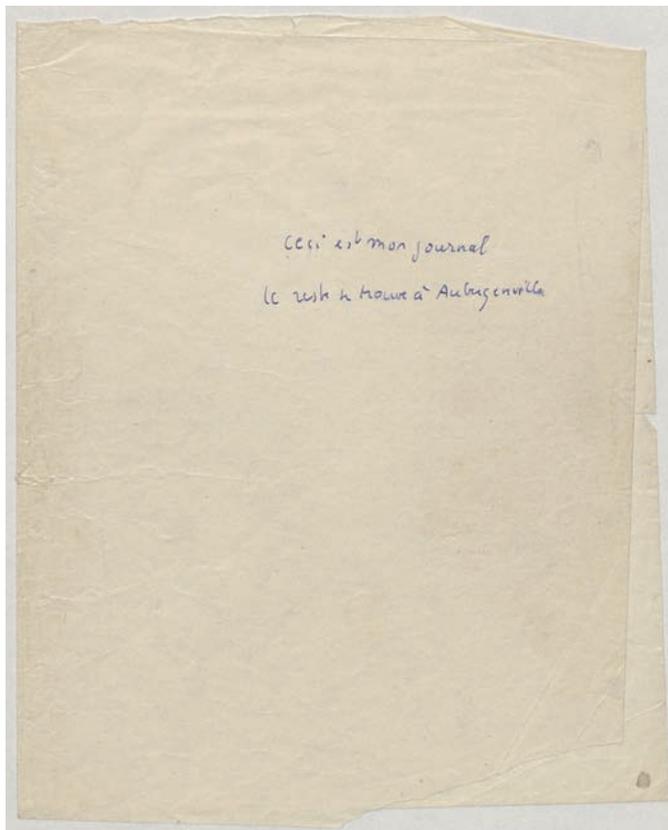
Mémorial de la Shoah

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Aubergenville – a village approximately 30 miles west of Paris, 1942
From left to right: Jean Morawiecki, François Job, Hélène Berr, and Jean Pineau
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Pages extracted from the manuscript of Hélène Berr's Journal © Mémorial de la Shoah – Coll. Mariette Job

